It is not a matter of surprise that these opinions should be entertained by all whoheve not realized the results of this system. The same views were held, successively, of the lead mines of Missouri and Illinois, and of the lead and copper mines of Arkansas, Northern Michigan and Wiscopsin. As an additional reason bowever, for the consin. As an additional reason, however, for the adoption of this system in California, it is alleged adoption of this system in California, it is needed that the soil in many of the placers is utterly valueless, except for the mineral found therein, and that, when that mineral is exhausted, the land is worth nothing. When the history of the past, with reference to this question, is considered, it will be found that there are few, if any, points of difference that like causes have produced like

will be found that there are few, if any, points of difference—that like causes have produced like effects in all these States, and that the same results will probably be experienced on the Pacific, if the leasing system is introduced there.

From the beginning the Government has manifested a desire to retain an interest in lands containing valuable minerals. This is a natural feeling in those, who, dazzled by the supposed value of the treasure, patriotically desire that the Government should. ing in those, who, dazzied by the supposed value of the troasure, patriotically desire that the Government should share in it. When experience, however, shows that the cost of obtaining this share by the leasing system exceeds the benefits derived from it, and is attended by a long train of serious evils, that system should at once be aban-

The first action on the part of the Government in relation to this subject was the ordinance of 13th April, 1785, by which one-third part of all gold, silver, lead and copper mines, was reserved to the United States. Here it will be perceived to the United States. that it was not proposed to reserve or lease the land—the genius and spirit of the people would not have tolerated that system of vasalage.

This ordinance provided that the lands should

This ordinance provided that the lands should be sold, but that in accordance with a usage then in force in Europe, a portion of the valuable mines therein should remain to the sovereignty. The next was the joint Resolution of 18th of April, 1800, directing the employment of an agent to collect information relative to the copper mines of Lake Superior.

to collect information relative to the copper mass of Lake Superior.

A report was made in accordance with this resolution, but no further action was had in relation to these mines, till after the treaty with the Chippewas of 4th October, 1842, by which that country was acquired. The third were the acts of 3d March, 1807, authorising the President to lease the Lead Mines in the Indian Territory.

Under these laws the leasing system was adopted. Of the early operations of it we have but little information, as the mineral lands were placed under the control of the War Department in 1821, and prior to that time there was but little if any thing done in it.

if any thing done in it.

The first official information I have found is The first official information I have found is contained in the Report of the Secretary of War, of the 16th February, 1843, in which it is stated that the whole amount of rent lead received by the Government in 1841 and 1842, was 74,324 pounds, worth about \$1,600,—a sum that would not more than pay the annual salary of one of the Superintendents employed in the service. By subsequent Report from the War Department, it was shown that the rent received in 1843 and 1844, amounted to 242,814 pounds of lead worth about \$4,856.—while the amount expended on account of Mineral Lands by the Government, in cluding salaries of officers, &c. during the same cluding salaries of officers, &c. during the same period, was \$20,729, making an actual loss to the Government by the operation of \$15,873. If to this be added the amount that would have been this be added the amount that would have been realized from these lands, if they had been sold at the ordinary minimum of \$1.25 per acre, and the expenses, costs, &c. that grew out of the vast number of suits instituted by the United States to recover tent due by delegation. number of saits instituted by the United States to recover rent due by defaulting lessees, to vacate fraudulent entries, &c. it would amount to a sum in comparison to which the loss abovementioned would be insignificant. Subsequently, in consequence of active measures having been taken by the District Attorney for that purpose, a great er amount of rent was received, but without any abatement of the attendant evils. So fully was Congress satisfied of the inexpediency of this system, with reference to revenue, and of the actual loss that the Government had sustained from the had well as the control of the second of the that loss that the Government, it, that on the 3d March, 1849, an act was passed, authorizing the President of the United States, to cause the valuable load mines reserved in the State of Missouri, to be exposed to public sale, subject to the ordinary minimum. This was followed. state of Missour, to be exposed to passet, subject to the ordinary minimum. This was followed by the act of 11th July, 1846, directing the mineral lands of Illinois, Southern Wisconsin, and Iowa, to be sold, by the acts of 1st and 3d March, 1847, directing the sale of the valuable copper mines of Lake Superior, &c.—and finally by the act of 26th September, 1850, reducing their minimum price to that of ordinary public lands.

Thus it is seen that the whole of the leasing yes.

Thus it is seen that the whole of the leasing system, and the reservation of the mineral lands or account of their supposed value, after the experi once of nearly lifty years, have been finally abolish ed, in some of the richest mineral regions face of the earth, and that, so far as exhib been made, it is shown to have been a loss to th Government directly to a considerable sum and indirectly to avastly greater amount.

It may be well to consider also the effect of this system upon the morals of the community in which it existed.

Having only a temporary connection with the soil, and that of a character calculated to stimulate every effort for their own pecuniary advantage the lessees had no inducement to aid in sustaining the laws, or encouraging a proper moral tone in the community. Success in mining operations secured wealth, failure produced poverty, want, These mutations begot a spirit attendant evils. of wild speculating bazzard, which in many cases was carried out to the fullest extent, and assisted in corrupting the moral sense and feelings of many in the community. The Government was regardd as a rich landed monopolist, that had no feeling unison with the interest of the tenant, but was in unison with the interest of the tenant, but was rather striving to strip him of a part oilthe earnings of his toil and privations. Hence arose a feeling of resistance to the Government and laws, and a dis position to evade those laws and the obligations of contracts by every possible expedient. Conscious of this kind of vassalage, the miners learned to look upon their Government with fe ssatisfaction and ill will and to manifest these mentiments in bitter compaints and remonstrances.

This constant warring for wealth stimulated so feelings of cupidity, which were increased by consciousness of oppression, and induced the miners not only to avoid, whenever practicable, the payment of tribute or rent, but also to enroach on the rights of each other.

Unceasing litigation was the consequence be-

tween the Government and miners, and among e miners themselves, either for the collection of rents, or to remedy some real or supposed wrong.
The familiarity with vice thus induced, by a
natural transition extended to individual and so

cial relations, the whole producing a state of socie ty that could only be realized by personal obser vation, but which was well known to exist to a greater or less extent in all the mining districts where the leasing system was in force.

Communities were kept in unceasing turmoil, ferment, litigation and bloodshed, by this odious

and that these evils were thus caused is dent, from the fact that after the abrogation of that system, the same communities are as orderly peaceful, and law abiding, as any people in the

The leasing system was also the cause of much The leasing system was also the cause of much irritation, jealousy and complaint on the part of the States within whose jurisdiction it was practiced. They justly complained that they were erippled in their resources by being restricted in the power of taxation; that the General Government, instead of selling the land, retained the fee, and stood in the attitude of a powerful and opulent landlord, holding a lacre portion of the population in an abject and servite tenancy, destroying all inducements to cultivation, or the making of permanent improvements or settlements upon the land, until Congress, seeing the accumulated evils and permissions consequences, abolished, as before and pernicious consequences, abolished, as before stated, the whole system. It may be argued that in regions containing the

precious metals, and where the lands in many cases, aside from the minerals, are useless, the same results would not be experienced. That it would be an unjustifiable disregard of the public interest to sell for any ordinary price, a tract of land containing a rich gold or quicksilver mine—while it would be equally unjust to individuals to charge them such price for lands that should prove wholly worthless

charge them such wholly worthless.

wholly worthless.

The answer is, that this state of things existed in the Lake Superior regions, with this difference, that here the mineral is copper, while on the Pacific, it is gold, &c. The lands, however, in both regions aside from the minerals, are equally useless, yet those who were engaged in the Lake Superior operations, cheerfully purchased large bodies of worthless land, extending even to three miles square, at high rates, for the purpose of securing a good mining location; and the fact that the mineral on the Pacific is the more valuable, will only have a tendency to cause the greater of forts to defeat the Government in the collection of the tribute.

The further allegation may be made that in the

Lake Superior region mining could only be carried on profitably by companies, and at a very great outlay of capital and labor. By recent advices from California it appears that individual mining is declining, and that the mineral wealth

of that country can only be successfully developed by combinations of capital and labor. Further,—from those advices I am inclined to think that those engaged in the mining operations there, do not probably realize as much as the same number employed in agricultural or other branches of industry in that, or other sections of our Union; and that but comparatively few of the many thus engaged, acquire more than sufficient to pay expenses, or to enable them to return to the old States.

South hoises the fact, when all are left free and

the old States.

Such being the fact when all are left free and untrammeled to prosecute their labors, wholly unconstrained, as to time or place, and to enjoy the fruits of their toil, what would be the state of fruits of their toil, what would be the state of things if the country were swarming with office-bolders, and the enterprizing emigrant, after sur-mounting the most appaling difficulties, dangers, and bardships, should find himself subject to the dictation of agents of the Government, to direct his movements and require of him a share of the means acquired by trying efforts and herculean

I therefore recommend that the lands in California be sold,—those that are agricultural in the or-dinary way, and those that contain valuable minerals, in small lots, and subject at first to an increa-sed minimum; that these mineral lands, after due

rals, in small lots, and subject at hist to an indreased minimum: that these mineral lands, after due public notice, be put up to the highest bidder, in quantities only to suit the demand, that after such offering, if they should remain unsold, to be subject to entry at an increased minimum.

And if it be the determination of Congress to secure a recompense for the valuable mineral contained in those lands that they provide by law, that all those minerals shall be assayed in California, by the United States,—that a given ratio of the same thus assayed shall course to the Government, and that no mineral shall be exported from the country, until it is thus assayed.

The business of this Office has been greatly increased by the general and special legislation of Congress, granting bounty lands, providing for the adjustment of private claims, making donations to the States for internal improvements.

Beside all this, we have in anticipation the arduous and immense labors incident to the management of the "private land claims," and of the "public lands," in our new acquisitions, which doubtless, to a greater or less extent, will be assigned to this Office by early legislation.

Newithstanding the acqual accumulation of

doubless, to a greater or ress extent, will be assigned to this Office by early legislation.

Notwithstanding the actual accumulation of duties, and those in prospect, it is not proposed, at this time, to ask any addition to the employees of this office, as it is hoped that by an energetic and zealous application of our present force to the public business, it will be found adequate to the realization of the just expectations of the

intry. For the statistics alluded to in the forego I beg leave to refer to the accompanying state ments, in alphabetical order; and for the condtion of the surveys, to the able reports herewith

from the Surveyors General.

With great respect, your cheditent servant,

(Signed) J. BUTTERFIELD, Commissi

Hon. A. H. H. Syvart, Secty of the Interior.

REPORT OF SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

REPURI OF SEURETARY OF THE WAY!.

NAVY DEPARTMENT, Saurday, Nov. 30.

Sing In anticipation of the session of Congress, I respectfully submit the annual report of this department of the public service.

The vessels in commission during the past year, exclusive of the steamer Michigan, under the command of Commodore Bullus, which has been cruising on the lakes above Niagara, giving protection to our commerce, and rendering assistance to pur distressed merchantmen on those inland seas, have been employed in six different squadrons. The home squadron, Commodore Parker con

The home squadron, Commodore Parker commanding, whose field of operations extends from the banks of Newfoundland to the mouth of the Amazon River, has comprised the frigate Raritan, Captain Page, the sloop-of-war Albany, Commander Randolph, the sloop-of-war Germantown, Commander Lowndes, the steamer Vixen, Lieutenant Commanding Smith, the steamer Water Witch, Lieut. Commanding Totten, and the schooner Flira, Lieut. Commanding Turner, and has been chiefly occupied in the West Indies and the Gulf of Mexico. The yalundle services of the vessels of this ico. The valuable services of the vessels of this squadron, together with the frigate Congress and the steamer Saranae, in preventing a violation of our national obligations, in an attempted invasion our national obligations, in an attempted invasion of the Island of Cuba from the United States, and the mission of Commodore Morris, to intercede with the Spanish authorities of that island for the lives and liberation of our misguided fellow-citizens who had joined in that expedition and had been captured, were made known to Congress in a communication from the late President, in the weather I lives last. The frients Ratinan being The frigate Raritan, month of June last The frigate Raritan, being required for more distant service, was withdrawn from this squadron in the month of May, and after being refitted, was dispatched, under the command of Captain Gauntt, to the South Pacific Ocean. The steamers Water Witch and Vixen standing in need of repairs, were brought for that purpose to the navy yard at Washington, and are expected soon to be again ready for sea. The sloop Germantown having been infected with yelonth of June last shop Germantown having been infected with yel-low fever during her cruise in the West Indies, was taken early in the present Autumn to the port of New-York, and being now thoroughy cleansed and refitted, is preparing to join the squadron on and refitted, is preparing to join the squadron on the coast of Africa. The steamer Saranac, Capt. Tattnall, has been lately added to this squadron, and bears the broad pennant of Commodore Parker.

mand of Commodore T. Ap C. Jones until the month of June last, when he was relieved and succeeded by Commodore McCauley. It consists of the frigate Savannab, Captain Page, boaring the bread pennant of the Commander of the squadrou, the frigate Raritan, Capt. Gauntt, the sloops Vandalia, Commander Gardner, Vincennes, Commander Hudson, Falmouth, Commander Pearson St. Mary's, Commander Magrader, Warren, (inseaworthy and used as a storeship), Lieut, Pick ering, the steamer Massachusetts, Lieut, Knox and the storeship Supply, Lieut, Kennedy, Ti sloop Preble, Commander Glynn, and the stor ship Fredonia, Lieut, Neville, are now on the homeward voyage from this station, and the shi of the-line Ohio, Commander Stribling, returns herefrom in April, and was placed in ordinary the navy-yard in Charlestown. It is intended that the frigate Raritan and sloop St. Mary s, which have been recently dispatched to this squadron together with a third vessel, to be designated by to be designated by the Commodore, shall cruise between Cape Horn and Panama, and Westward to the 180th degree of longitude, visiting the Marquisas and Friendly Islands, and making their depot of supplies at Valparaiso, while the residue of the squadron will be generally employed in that ocean north of the equator. The advantage, indeed the necessity of an efficient fleet in the Pacific for the totection of an extended territory and suids and wonderful commerce in that hitherto unoccu-pied region of the world, cannot be too highly es-timated, and will be again adverted to in the se-

uel of this communication.

The squadron on the coast of Brazil, Commo ore McKeever commanding, is composed of igate Congress, Captain McIntosh, bearing frigate Congress, Captain McIntosh, bearing the broad pennant of the commodore, the sloop St. Louis, Commander Cooke, the brig Bainbridge, Lieut. Manning, and the storeship Relief, Lieut. Totten. The frigate Brandywine, Captain Bonman, the flag ship of Commodore Storer, who was recently relieved from the command of this station, is expected soon to arrive at the port of New-York. The croise of this squadron extending from the mouth of the River Amazon to Cape Horn, and occasionally eastward to the coast of Africa, its attention has been expecially directed. rica, its attention has been especially dir-the suppression, by legitimate interposition e African slave trade, still carried on to a iderable extent between Brazil and the coast Africa, to the protection of our neutral rights in the state of hostility lately existing between the Argentine Republic and the Banda Oriental of Uraguay, and the cultivation of relations of commerce and amity with the Governments and peo-ple of the several nations along the coast of its

cruising ground.

The Mediterranean squadron, under the command of Commodore Morgan, consists of his flagship the Razee, Independence, Capt. Jamesson, the frigate Cumberland, Captain Latimer, the steamer Mississippi, Captain Long and the storeship Lexington, Lieutenant Mitchell. The course of political events in Europe not appearing to require the continuance of the large force, which had been assembled in that sea, in consequence of the unsettled aspect of affairs at the date of the last annual report from this Department, the frigate St. Lawrence, Captain Paulding, attacked to this squadron, was ordered to proceed to the this squadron, was ordered to proceed to the to this squadron, was ordered to proceed to the Baltic, on a short cruise, and thence to return to the United States. She arrived at New York in the present month. The frigate Constitution, Captain Conever, also of fins squadron, has been ordered home, and may be expected daily. Under

orders from the Department, Commodore Morgan, with his flagship I dependence and the steamer Mississippi, visited Lisbon in the month of June and received on board our Charge d'Affaires, on the occasiion of his retirement from that court, and conveyed him to Naples. This squadron has been actively engaged in visiting the various ports of the Maditarranean the Adiants and the Archi-

been actively engaged in visiting the various ports of the Mediterranean, the Advintic, and the Archipelago, and has maintained a discipline and efficiency highly commendable.

The squadron on the coast of Africa, ander the command of Commodore Gregory, embraces his flagship, the sloop of war Portsmouth, Commander Peck, the sloop of war John Adams. Commander Pewell, the sloop of war Dale, Commander Pearson, the brig Porpoise, Lieut, Lardner, and the brig Perry, Lieut, Foote, Orders were issued for the return of the sloop of war Yorktown, Commander Marston, lately attached to this squadron, but before their receipt she was wrecked on a coral reef on the northern extremity of the Island of Mayo, one of the Cape de Verdes. All the f Mayo, one of the Cape de Verdes. All the flicers and crew were saved, and have been sent officers and crew were saved, and nave over san-home in the sloop John Adams; they arrived at Norfolk on the 17th inst., the vessel is a total loss. Under the vigilance and energy of the officers of this force the slave traffic has been broken up on the west coast of Africa, but it still prevails on the south coast, in vessels bearing the flag of the he south coast, in vessels bearing the flag of the United States, in spite of the efforts of our cruis-ers, which have been from time to time dispatched ers, which have been from the substitute of the from the squadron to suppress it. Within the present month a brig called the Chatsworth, captured as a prize on the latter coast by Lieut Foote, in the brig Perry, for being concerned, in the slave trade, has arrived in the port of Bulti-

more for trial.

Occasional instances have occurred of the in torierence of prissi trusers with ressess occaring our flag on that coast, upon suspicion of their be-ing slavers: but in each case the offense has been atoned for by explanations and applogies to our officers on that station, and the reports thereof have been transmitted from this Department to Department of State

the Department of State.

The squadron in the East India and China seas, lately under the command of Commodore Geisinger, who returned home in the sloop St. Mary s, in June last, was transferred to the command of Commodore Voorhees, and consists of the sloop of war Plymouth, Commander Gedney, and the brig Dolphin, Lieut. Commanding Page, having hear recently detailed from this service on the borg Polphin, Lieut. Commanding Page, having been recently detached from this service on the expiration of their cruise, are now on their pas-sage to the United States. In the month of February last the Commander of this squadron took on board of his flag ship, the sloop of war Plymouth, at Macao, Mr. Ballestier, who had been appointed a Commandia Agent of the United appointed a Commercial Agent of the 1. States, and carried him to Cochin-China and parts of Eastern Asia, with a view to the extension of our commercial relations among those distant and peculiar nations.

It is a source of high gratification that wherever

our flag has been displayed by a national vessel, it has received the respect due to the national character, and that our interests and commerce in every sea have been secure and prosperous under cotection. der the joint resolution of Congress, approv-

ed May 2, 1850, "authorizing the President t cept and attach to the navy two vessels offere Henry Grinnell, Ess. of Navy Verb Henry Grinnell, Esq. of New York, to be sent to he Arctic seas in search of the British Com-nander, Sir John Franklin, and his companions," mander, Sir John Franklin, and his companions, whose uncertain and melancholy situation has enlisted the sympathies of the friends of science and nautical adventure throughout the world, two brigantines were received, and, by order of my predecessor, were placed under the command of Lieut. J. De Haven, who, with a sufficient crew of officers, and men, nobly volunteered for that service. The command of one of these vessels was assigned to Past Midshipman S. P. Griffin, Lieut. De Haven commanding the other in person, and having the direction of the expedition. They sailed from New-York in the month of May, and at the date of their last report to the Department, had advanced to the 75th degree of north latitude, and about the 50th degree of west longitude, gallantly contending with the icebergs of that region, and, as yet, not without hope of success in their

and about the outs degree of west inighting, garlantly contending with the icebergs of that region,
and, as yet, not without hope of success in their
humane but perilous enterprise.

In the active service affoat of the officers of the
Navy, it is proper to enumerate their labors on
the Coast Survey, a work which, although committed to the direction of the Treasury Department, is, in the most important part of its operations, essentially performed by them. During the
last year, nine parties, eight in the Atlantic and
one in the Pacific, each in charge of a Lieutenant
in the Navy, accompanied by a competent force of
midshipmen as assistants, have been actively engaged in this survey. Whether, in consideration
of the work, and the large agency in its execution devolved on the Navy, it would not be more
appropriate and just, as well as economical, to
assign it wholly to this branch of the service, its
worthy the attentive consideration of the Legislaworthy the attentive consideration of the Legisla

Having presented a hasty review of the ser Having presented a hasty review of the service of our various squadrons during the past year, and designing to surgest some general considerations upon the naval policy required by the present interests of the country, I deem it needful to a full comprehension of the subject, very briefly to review our present Naval Establishment.

The vessels of the Navy of the United States consist of 7 ships of the line, I razee, 12 frigates, the second of the United States consist of 7 ships of the line, I razee, 12 frigates,

Elsloops of war, 4 brigs, 2 schooners, 5 steam fri-gates, 3 steamers of the first class, 3 steamers less than first class, 5 storesbips. Of those there are in commission, 1 razee, 6

Of these there are in commission, frigates, 15 sloops of war, 4 brigs, 2 schooners, (Coast Survey,) 2 steam frigates, 1 steamer of the first class, 3 steamers less than first class, 3 ships, of the line, as receiving ships, 1 steamer do, 1

There are also on the stocks and in progress of

construction, but the work thereon now suspended, four ships of the line and two frigates.

To the foregoing may be added a contingent naval force of vessels owned by individuals, but val force of vessels owned by individuals, but built by contract with the Government and em-ployed in the transportation of the mail, and liaployed in the transportation of the mail, and hable in any emergency to be taken at valuation and converted into vessels of war, namely: Four steamers of the first class employed on the line between New York and Liverpool. A fifth is contracted for, but not yet constructed. One steamer of the first class between New York and Panama. A second steamer on this line has been brought into use, but has not been finished so as to undergo inspection and be received. The contract on this line, as on that to Liverpool, provides for five steamships.

for five steamships.

To supply the demands of the service in the construction, equipment, and repair of vessels of all descriptions, navy vards are established at—1. Portsmouth, New Hampshire; 2. Charlestown, Massachusetts; 3. Brooklyn, New York; 4. Phil-adelphia, 5. Washington; 6. Norfolk; 7. Pen-

adelphia; 5. Washington; 6. Norfolk; 7. Pen-sacola; 8. Memphis; Permanent stone docks have been many years since erected at the yards in Charlestown, Norfolk, and a third is nearly completed in that at Brooklyn. Floating balance docks with stone basins and railways are expected to be completed for use at Portsmonth and Pensacola in the coarse of the ensuing year, and a floating sectional dock, also with a stone basin and railway, at Philadelthe ensuing year, and a floating sectional most, also with a stone basin and railway, at Philadelphia within the same period. If these three docks shall realize the expectations of the Government, they, with the dry dock at New York, will have augmented our naval facilities in this respect threefold within the next twelve months, and will have provided all the accommodation of that kind which may be required on the waters of the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico for many years to come. The navy yard at Washington carries on a highly important manufactory of ordinance and ordinance stores, of anchors, chain cables, steam engines, and other fabrics of iron, and preparations are in progress to creet there machinery for rolling copper, an establishment long wanted, as well on the score of economy as to turnish a better quality of rolled copper for sheeting vessels than can be obtained in market. The yard at Memphis is being immediately prepared for the manufacture of cordage and other supplies of hempen materials for naval uses, and its operations may be enlarged with the necessities of the service. I have regretted to learn that there has been some loss in the expenditure there, in consequence of the diligicalty of obtaining a firm founbeen some loss in the expenditure there, in cons uence of the difficulty of obtaining a firm foun ation for the buildings; and it is in contempla tion to have a survey of the yard by a board of engineers constituted for that purpose, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, to provide against

the Bureau of Yards and Docks, to provide against like casualties for the future.

In conformity with the act of the last session authorizing the construction of a sectional or floating dry-dock basin and railway on the coast of the Pacific, I have invited proposals for the coastruction of such a work, and the officers of the proper bureau are now engaged in calculations intended to test the reasonableness of those offered. So soon as satisfactory terms shall be agreed upon, it is the intention of the Department to expedite the

work with all pract cable dispatch.

It is estimated that, independently of the pub-

lic works, fixtures, machinery, &c. at the existing navy yard, the stores on hand for the construction, equipment, and repair of vessels are equal in value in round numbers to \$6,500,000. The rein value in round numbers to so, 300,000. The resources of the country in timber, iron, copper, hemp, and every species of naval supplies, will enable these to be increased according to our necessities. Many intelligent persons incline to the opinion that, in the present state of mechanical science and enterprise, and with the abundance of capital in our country, it would be wiser to rely upon contracts with private citizens for the building and repairs of our public vessels than to carry on the work under the supervision of public officers. And it may well be doubted whether, i carry on the work under the supervision of pions officers. And it may well be doubted whether, if a system were now to be projected, without reference to what has heretofore been done, the number of our navy yards might not be considerably shridged. With these establishments, however, abridged. With these establishments, however, new capable of use, and with the inconsiderable amounts necessary to preserve them, I cannot recommend that any of them be abandoned. The system of dependence on private contracts, moreover, would deprive the Government of any on venience of location for repairing and building vessels, and concentrate all such operations in the commercial cities, where private as well as public patronage might be expected. It is, moreover, so indispensible that ships of war shall be constructed on the most improved plans, to be devised only by a practical knowledge of naval warfare as well as of naval architecture, and shall be thoroughly as of naval architecture, and shall be thorough built of the best materials, that it would be ha ardous to resort to a new method of supplying them, where the chief security for their effective ness would be the profit to be realized by the con-tractor. In a time of war, when every expedient might be necessary to add to the navy, our private

tant auxiliaries for the supply of vessels, but it would be most injudicious to depend on them as our only resource in preparation for war.

Such being the condition of the vessels of the nsvy, and our facilities and preparations for augmenting their number, the question naturally presents itself, What naval force do we require?—The answer to this question must, of course, vary with the varying circumstances of the constry.—Having been organized on its present basis by the act of 1798, and considerably enlarged, in consequence of the state of hostilities with France the act of 1798, and considerably enlarged, in consequence of the state of hostilities with France for the two or three years succeeding, the naval force was reduced in 1801, and the number of vessels and officers limited by law, the supernumerary officers being discharged and the vessels sold. The Tripolitan war, which soon succeeded, required speedy additions to the force thus reserved, and with our extended and increasing commerce, with the obvious necessity for its protection, and the protracted dispute with Great Britain as to the rights of our flar on the overan, and the tion, and the protracted dispute with Great Britain as to the rights of our flag on the ocean, and the brilliant achievements by which those rights were vindicated by the navy in the war which ended the dispute, it so gained in the public estimation that at the close of the war, instead of a reduction of this arm of the national defense, as was the case with the army, the annual sum of \$1,000,000, for eight years, was appropropriated for the gradual increase of the navy. Although this appropriation was reduced to \$200,000 per year, in 1820, the policy of gradual increase still continued to be a favorite object with Congress and the country. In 1825, 1826, and 1827, the question of a proper naval peace establishment was much discussed and considered, but was left undecided by the Legislature, and appropriations for increase. the Legislature, and appropriations for increase, as well as mainteance and repair, have continued to be made, with some irregularity as to intervals and amounts, until the present time, but without

any definition by Congress of the number and de-scription of vessels deemed necessary for the na-tional marine.

The numbers in the various grades of the naw has, until within a recent period, been left still more andefined than the number of ships. Since the reduction of the number of vessels and men, after the reestablishment of friendly relations after the recatablishment of friendly relations with France by treaty in 1901, no statute for more than forty years ever limited the sum total of persons to be employed in the navy, or in its several ranks and officers. The number of commissioned officers in any grade up to and including a captainey depended on the President and Senate, and the number of warrant officers on the President of Head of the Department alone. By a provisional clause in the annual appropriation bill, approved August 4th, 1842, the number of officers in the respective grades of the navy was directed not to be increased beyond the number in service on the 1st of January, 1842; and any further appointment of midshipmen was forbidden until they should be reduced to the number in service on the 1st of January, 1841. In this retrospective provise of an appropriation bill the number of officers was fixed by a standard not then before the eye of the Legislature, but to be searched for in the roster of the service for the two preceding years, and by this, after being thus ascerticed in terminates to be recalled.

cel for in the roster of the service for the two preceding years, and by this, after being thus ascertained, it continues to be regulated.

The personnel of the navy, thus established,
comprises 6s captains, 97 commanders, 337 lieutenants, 68 surgeons, 37 passed assistant surgeons,
43 assistant surgeons, 64 pursers, 24 chaptains, 12
professors of mathematics, 11 masters in the line
of promotion, and 464 passed and other midshipmen; to which is to be added, besides other warrant officers, according to the annual appropriation for pay and subsistence, 7,500 petry officers,
scamen, ordinary seamen, landsmen, and boys.

The capacity of the country to enlarge this
force, whenever desirable, may be readily perceived by stating that we have now in the mercantile marine 3,000,000 of tuns of shipping, an

cantile marine 3,000,000 of tuns of shipping, an amount greater than that of any other nation of the world; and, according to the ordinary estimate of six men to every one hundred tuns, there are erchant service 180,000 seamen. In this array of hardy mariners to recruit from, and in our wast resources for building, equipping, and arming ships of war, we possess the element of a raval power unsurpassed in the history of nations. The problem to be solved by the statesmen is how far these elements are to be brought into use. Whether the present earthlishwort, with its ac-Whether the present establishment, with its accustomed regulation and direction is adapted to our present necessities, or whether it may be reformed, regulated, and improved, so as better to answer the great object of its institution! And in considering these questions, we must bear con-stantly in mind that we have arrived at a new era in our history, arising from our occupation and wast extension of our territories on the coast of

It is not a matter of surprise that a system which liss grown to its present dimensions without any law of increase, should be found unshapely and disproportioned. A obvious fault of the present organization of the personnel of the navy, as above set forth, is the disparity beween the head and subordinate parts. The atural desire for promotion has brought into the igher grades a greater number of officers than is quired by the present force of ships and men, than will be required in any state of things kely soon to occur. The shore stations, comprehending navy yards,

receiving ships, and maval asylum, and including one of each for the Pacific coast, will require it captains, 21 commanders, 56 heutenants, 27 sur-geons, 10 passed and assistant surgeons, 11 pur geons, 10 passed and assistant surgeons, 1 pur-sers, 12 chaplains, 60 passed and other midship-men; leaving for sea service 5e captains, 76 com-manders, 271 lieutenants, 11 surgeons, 70 passed and assistant surgeons, 50 pursers, 10 chaplains, 404 passed and other midshipmen.

Assuming the present number of 7,500 petty officers, scamen, ordinary seamen, landsmen and boxs as the force to he commanded and dividing

boys, as the force to be commanded, and dividing it into six squadrons, each to consist of 1 ship of the line. I frigate, 1 steamer of the 1st class, steamer of the 2d class, 3 sloops of war, it will give employment at one time to 24 captains, 3 commanders, 150 licutesants, 36 surgeons, 6 passed and assistant surgeons, 42 pursers, 6 chaplains, 396 passed and other midshipmen: leaving unemployed, either on land or sea, 26 captains, 4 ommanders, 115 lieutenants, 5 surgeons, 10 passeo od assistant surgeons, 8 pursers, 4 chapiains, 6

passed and other midshipmen.

In a service subjected to hardship, danger and deprivation of the comforts of domestic life, there ald be, at all times, such a number of officers as to allow a reasonable respite between active cruises at sea, and to provide against losses from

sudden casualty.

But as duty on shore is itself a relief from duty at sea, it is believed that the above list of supernumerary officers, at least in the three highest numerary concers, at least in the for an effective grades, is greater than is demanded for an effective naval establishment, and I therefore recommend that the numbers be reduced to 60 Captains, 80 Commanders, 300 Lieutenants, withcorresponding modifications in the inferior grades. Such a re-duction would adapt the supply of officers to the state of the service, and, by affording employ-ment to all, with occasional intervals of reluxa-tion, would tend to advance the standing of prossional skill and acquirement. It would ave in the grades of and below a lieutenan leave in the grades of and below a lieutenancy a sufficient number for the duties of ordnance, hydrography, scientific observation, the coast survey, and all special service, beside active duty at sen and at the navy yards, and other shore

While the propriety of this curtailment would appear to be manifest to give symmetry to t naval corps, and to infuse life and animation in all its parts by more active employment, and therefore to be demanded by the public interests. therefore to be demanded by the protective to those who have devoted themselves to the service of their country, and have given to it the prime of their manhood, requires that it shall be effected in the most delicate manner to the feelings of those discharged, and that suitable remuneration shall be made to them for the disappointment and change in their means of lively. muneration shall be made to them for the disap-pointment and change in their means of liveli-hood. We are not, however, without precedents for such a proceeding in the reduction of the navy by the act of March 3, 1801, and the large reduc-tion of the army to a peace establishment by the act of March 2, 1821. Whether the designation of the persons to be discharged shall be devolved on the President, as in the instances just recited, or on a board of officers convened for that purpose, is respectfully referred to the wisdom of Congress. Having by this process determined on the size

on a board of otherse of the wisdom of Congress.

Having by this process determined on the size of the Navy, it will be necessary, in order to render it effective, to provide that, from time to time, as officers may decline in capacity for useful public service, either from superannuation or other cause, they may be retired from the active list on terms both just and liberal.

The duty of the Government to take care, inold age or in unavoidable decreptude or disease, of its gallant and faithful servants, should be in no capacity the control of the control

its gallant and faithful servants, should be in no respect pretermitted, but nothing should be allowed to interfere with the efficiency of the Navy for the purposes of its institution. Incompatency from vice and dissipation should be viewed with displeasure—incompetency from unavoidable and hot orable causes with commisseration and kindness. But in neither case should command or promotion be denied to those who must really and effectually stand between the country and its conpromotion be denied to those who must remy and effectually stand between the country and its enemies in the boar of danger. Even in jud 'ial offices, held during good behavior, in all well regulated States, provision has been made for removal from office for mental or physical incompetency as well as for criminality.

In this connection it is worthy of serious consideration whather more senjority of commission

Well as for criminality.

In this connection it is worthy of serious consideration whether mere seniority of commission should not be disregarded in promotions to grades above that of commander. Although the power of the President in nominating to all offices is unlimited by the Constitution, and dependent on no qualifications in the candidate, and although in a few instances there have been departures from the rule in question, yet general usage has made lineal promotion to all grades in the navy almost a matter of right. It is certainly convenient, inasmuch as it prevents favoritism and advances discipline and subordination, by suppressing hostile rivalry, to adhere to this usage to a certain point of elevation, but it is inconsistent with the spirit of the age, as well as with all our ideas of propriety, that the highest rank in a profession whose active members are habitually exposed, if not to the dangers of battle, to those of the ocean, the tempest, and of pestilential climates, and in which there is so wide a field for competition in acquire ment, skill and conduct, should be made to depend on longevity or survivorship—the mere conditions ment, sain and connect, should be more conditions and accidents of entailed estates in family settlements. It is, therefore, proposed that in all fature promotions to a captaincy or to a higher rank, such shall be established, seniority shall not be regarded, and merit shall be esteemed the only criterion of selection. This will appear to be the terion of selection. This will appear to be the more eminently just and proper, since, under the present system, no brevet rank or other advancement in the naval service is allowed to reward the most heroic exploit or acknowledged professional speriority, promotion coming none the sooner to the best, none the later to the worst, provided they can escape being cut off from the service by the sentence of a court-martial.

Another detect in the present establishment, too manifest to be overlooked by the most casual observer, is the disparity between the ages of subaltern officers and their grades, proceeding from the

server, is the disparity between the ages of subaltern officers and their grades, proceeding from the fixed numbers on each rank and the failue to provide for any promotion, except in cases of vacancy. The senior passed midshipmen, now in the service, are older than were Perry, Decatur, and Macdonough when they achieved their victories with so nuch renown to the country; the senior lieutenents past the age when military du ty is required of the citizen in the militia; and the commanders and Captains proportionally older. The aspiring youth, now entering the Navy, may not hope to reach the rank of a commander in the period which is ascertained to be the average duration of human life. This long apprenticeship, which is not requiris ascertained to be the average duration of numan life. This long apprenticeship, which is not requir-ed for learning his duties, but is occasioned by keeping him in waiting for promotion until the exit of some one above him, not only depresses his ambition by deferring his kepes, but denies him opportunity for the culture of his self-reliance, con-fidence in his own skill and judgment, and the hundred nameless attributes of a thorough officer,

hundred nameless attributes of a thorough officer, which are only to be acquired by being thrown upon his own resources and responsibility.

To remedy this defect, which has become the more grievous and striking since the limitation imposed on the number of officers and promotions by the law of 1842, already referred to, two methods have been severally suggested by officers of great merit and intelligence. great merit and intelligence:

1st. To reduce the number of Midshipmen, so as

to fornish only so many as may be required to supply the higher grades as vacancies may occur. Ed. To educate a number equally as great as that now established, and to fix an age in every grade, upon the attainment of which, if no vacan-cy exists for promotion, they may be retired from the Navy to find employment in the merchant ser-vice, and supply a reserve corps, in case of war, of the most efficient character. ent character.

or some preferable cure may be devised for this imperfection, is submitted for the deliberation of Congress.

I also most earnestly recommend that the service itself be clevated by recognizing by law the office of Commodore, and by the creation of at least two officers of the rank of Rear-Admiral. This increase of rank in the Navy, often proposed in the earlier history of the country, seems now to be demanded by the highest consideration of policy and duty. Not to speak of its effect in promoting and duty. Not to speak of its effect in promoting discipline and effectiveness, by an increased and concentrated responsibility in the highest grades of the service, it would add to the dignity of our of the service, it would add to the dignity of our officers, not unfrequently the representatives of their country in direct intercourse with foreign Governments, and to the respect accorded to them by those of other nations in their intercourse abroad, and furnish a new and powerful incentive to excellence in the minds of the meritorious and aspiring of all the inferior ranks. We have at this time veterans in our Navy, with the commissions only of captain, and the titles, by courtesy of commodore, because they have commanded of commodore, because they have commande squadrons, who meet on the ocean, as rear-adm rais and vice-admirals, cotemporaries in other services, with whom in early life they associated as co-licutements, and who now with superior rank as co-lectionats, and who how with superior rank have often commands numerically inferior to their own. A nation which must be classed among the great naval powers of the world, and which, in the abundance of its resources and its situation between the two greatest oceans, is capable of occupying the very first place, should no longer delay the establishment of higher naval ranks, and should look to and prepare for the com

ranks, and should look to and prepare for the command of fleets as well as squadrons in any exigency which may call for it.

Our navy, in the aggregate of persons, is about equal to the army. The commanders of some of its squadrons have actually under their command more men than a division, the command of a major general; and yet its highest commissioned officer, a captain, ranks with a colonel. By a resolution of the Continental Congress in 1776, providing a navy for the war of the Revolution, the relative rank of officers in the land and naval services was established as follows, viz an admiral, vices was established as follows, viz: an admiral, as a general, vice-admiral, as a lieutenant general, rear admiral, as a major-general; commodore, as a brigadier general; captain of a ship of 40 guns

and upward, as a colonel, &c.
This scheme of relative rank prevails in the British service at the present day. It is worthy of remark that, although at no period since has there been less than one majorgeneral of the army of the United States, our naval officers, though in of the inted states, our naval omeers, though in addition to their proper commands they are, from the nature of their service, much more frequently than those of the army called to act for their country in diplomatic intercourse with distant nations, whose artificial states of society render rank so important a consideration, have never been advanced beyond a commandant of a regiment. No comparition can possibly be indulged been advanced beyond a commandant of a regiment. No comparison can possibly be indulged to the disparagement of either of these necessary arms of our defense, which have so harmoniously cooperated against the public enemies wherever opportunity has permitted, and no good reason can be perceived why the highest officer of the one service should not, as a general rule, now as in 1770, and here as in Great Britain, be equal in 1770, and here as in Great Britain, be equal in 1780, and here as in Great Britain, be equal in 1780, and here as in Great Britain, be equal in 1780, and here as in Great Britain, be equal in 1780, and here as in Great Britain, be equal in 1780, and here as in Great Britain, be equal in 1780, and here as in Great Britain, be equal in 1780, and here as in Great Britain, be equal in 1780, and here as in Great Britain be equal in 1780, and here as in Great Britain, be equal in 1780, and here as in Great Britain be equal in 1780, and 17

long service and brilliant success of a veteran sol-dier, it may be accompanied or followed by its cor-relative of vice-admiral in the navy, according to the pleasure of the Legislature.

Of the two rear admirals proposed, one might be most usefully employed at the Department itself, when not on more active duty, in such suitself, when not on more active duty, in such supervision and direction of the personnel of the navy as might be assigned him by the boad of the Department, in analogy to the connection of the General in Chief and the Adjutant General with the Department of War. The other, when not in command at sea, should establish his quarters at San Francisco, or other point on the Pacific coast, and should be invested with command over all the naval officers and seamen west of the Rocky. the naval officers and scamen west of the Rocky Mountains, as well as the naval forces in the Pa-cific and in the China and East India seas, reporting all his orders and the operations and proceed-ings under them to the Department, at stated and periods. The distance of our Parific coast the seat of Government, even by the most from the seat of Government, even by the most expeditious route, is too great for an energetic system of naval operations, by means of the transmission of orders and dispatches to and fro, or even for the enforcement of proper discipline under the existing law. In the latter particular our squadron there is in a less eligible situation than it was before the acquisition of California. The commander of a squadron on a foreign station is empowered to order Courts martial, and to approve and carry into effect their sentences; but, if it be within the United States, a court can only be ordered by the President or the head of the Department. Thus military justice, which was formerly of easy enforcement where the squadron was sufficiently numerous to farnish the necessary officers to constitute a court, is dependent now on orders from W ashington, and has become too tardy in its administration for the ends of the service. This inconvenience is seriously felt, and demands an early remedy. It is, however, but one of many illustrations of the necessity for stationing on that coast an officer of higher rank and larger authority than any now existing in the navy. empowered to order Courts martial, and to approve

coast an officer of higher rank and larger authority than any now existing in the navy.

The object in maintaining our naval force in the Pacific, and demanding that it shall be in the highest degree of efficiency, is two fold:

1st. To protect a coast more than one thousand miles in length, occupied by a sparse population, probably not exceeding in the whole 300,000 souls, two thirds of whom are dependent on soagoing commerce for the supply of their ordinary food and raiment, and are separated by mountains and deserts of a thousand miles in extent from our other settlements.

2d. To give adequate protection and encouragement to our countrymen engaged in the whale fisheries, in the South Pacific, and to that expanding commerce with Eastern Asia, which our possessions on the Pacific will enable us to command, with a proper improvement of our lawful advantages. A naval policy adequate to those ends seems to be indispensably required. It is a fact, perhaps, not generally known, that the longest voyage, in the time necessary for its accomplishment, now made by navigators, is that from our Atlantic to our Pacific ports, and hence it will appear manifestly expedient, in cruises on that ocean, to lit age, in the time necessary for its accomplishment, now made by navigators, is that from our Atlantic to our Pacific ports, and hence it will appear manifestly expedient, in cruises on that ocean, to lit out naval expeditions from the Pacific const, which shall return thither at the end of their tour. A vessel sent there from the Atlantic, according to the present arrangement, to return at the end of three years, loses one year of the three in going and returning. And from the marked difference in the navigation of the two oceans, if the design be to bring her home to relit, she will need a condition of repair to enable her to weather Cape Horn and pass up the boisterous course of the Atlantic, which will qualify her for an extended cruise in the Pacific. The extraordinary state of prices now prevailing forbids the idea of building vessels or recruiting seamen on that coast. Indeed, the flag ship of the Commodore of the Pacific squadron was, at last advices, deficient by more than one half in her complement of men, without the ability to recruit more, except at wages far above those now allowed. It must, therefore, be grently to our interest, at least until a charge in property affairs in California.

ges far above those now allowed. It must, therefore, be greatly to our interest, at least until a change in monetary affairs in California—
1st. To build ships and recruit sailors on the Atlantic cosst for the Pacific fleet;
2d. When a sufficient number of vessels shall be placed on that side of the Continent to retain them there for permanent use; and
3d. That when crows are wanted to man them, after the expiration of the term of those originally

after the expiration of the term of those originally carried out to enlist them in the Atlantic ports and send them out in Government transports on the ordinary line of travel across the lathmus of Panama, as they are now transported from one

Atlantic port to another.

With a dock for repairing vessels on the California coast, as contemplated by the act of the last session of Congress, such a course of policy would

session of Congress, such a course of policy would emble us at all times to keep an effective fleet in the Pacific, and operate as a vast saving in time and money to the service in that quarter.

By a judicious disposition of our vessels, and the improvement of the organization and discipline of the personnel to the highest point of efficiency, it is believed that our naval force need not be immediately sugmented in any great degree, notwith standing the accession to our territories; and that the policy of "gradual increase" so long pursued, while it requires attention to every improvemant in naval construction and warfare, need not be materially hastened. materially hastened.

How great will be the transition in the art of war on the sea by reason of the introduction of steam as a prepelling power to vessels of war, re-mains yet to be determined. That it has already furnished an arm of great power, which has been well likened to flying artillery on land, is beyond all question, and though not concurring in the nion that war steamers will supersede sail yes sels as ships of war. I am yet thoroughly persuaded that they will be most valuable auxiliaries; and I respectfully submit for your examination here-with a letter from an officer of much intelligence and experience in the command of steamships of war in regard to their efficiency in hostile opera-tions, simply as striking bodies, in running down the vessels of an enemy by means of their great weight, and the momentum of which they are capable by the power of steam. As connected with this subject, I likewise invite your attention to the recommendation of the chief of the Bureau of Construction, that our sail ships of war hereafter to be constructed shall be furnished with steampropellers, to be used on occasions where celerity of motion adverse to the prevailing winds may be important. But with the improvements constantimportant. But wi h the improvements constantly going on in ocean steamers, I would not remmend a large addition to this species of naval force, except in the event of war, lest the progress of invention should supplant them by others of

superior construction.

Of the four war steamers authorized to be built by the act of Congress of the 3d of March, 1847, the Saranac only has been gotten ready for sea. It is, however, not doubted that the other three will be

also ready in the course of a few months.

While the Saranac will be retained in the home while the Saranac will be retained in the folios squadron as an effective cruiser in any emergency which may arise, it is contemplated to attach the Susquehanna to the East India squadron, and to send the two remaining ones to the Pacific and the coast of Brazil. It is in contemplation, also, to require the commandants of the squadrons in the Pacific and the East Indies, and in like manner of those on the coasts of Brazil and Africa, at certain convenient times and places, to meet with the greater part of their respective comwith the greater part of their respective com-mands for the purpose of exercising in fleets. It has so happened that all our naval battles in which the skill and prowess of our officers have been so signally maintained, have been (with inconsider-able exceptions on the lakes) fought between sin-cle ships; and it remains to be gle ships; and it remains to be demonstrated whether their proficiency in the signals, combina-tions, manuscures, and exercises of fleets is equal to their well tried shifting in inferior commands.

tions, mandares, and executes to their weel-tried abilities in inferior commands. The Naval Academy at Annapolis having been placed under a new and improved system of regulations, to take effect from the 1st day of July last, and onder an enlarged corps of professors, affords lations, to take effect from the 1st day of July last, and under an enlarged corps of professors, allowed facilities and means of professional education not heretofore enjoyed by the young gentlemen entering the service, and it is to be hoped is destined to turnish the Navy with what has been so long and so beneficially enjoyed by the army in the Military Academy at West Point. The attachment to the Naval Academy of a practice ship, for the purpose of practical instruction in seamanfor the purpose of practical instruction in seamanfor the purpose of practical instruction in seamanfor the state of the system of the Superintendent, in analogy to the system of encampment by the Cadeta, is regarded as an improvement of great value. The academic term, in conformity with the new arrangement, commenced on the list of October, under the direction of Commander Stribling as Superintendent, and is in successful progress. Plans and estimates ent, and is in successful progress. Plans and esti-maties for improvements in the buildings and grounds of the Academy will be found in the ra-port of the Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance and Hydropathy, which are approved and recommend-ed by the Department.

Applications of meritorious persons for the ap-pointment of midshipmen induce me to recom-mend that a few appointments at large be allowed to the President, as a means of promoting youth of and is in successful progress. Plans and esti